

SECRET

Summary of my meeting with President Dorticos, Premier Castro of Cuba and Foreign Minister Roa in 10:00 A.M., October 31, 1962

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I referred to Chairman Khrushchev's assurance on Sunday to President Kennedy regarding the dismantling and withdrawal of installations and missiles from Cuba and his assurance that he would invite a U.N. inspection team to verify these activities. I asked the Prime Minister if he had any reaction on Chairman Khrushchev's proposal.

The Prime Minister replied that Chairman Khrushchev could not legitimately make such a guarantee regarding installations on Cuban territory. The Prime Minister said that such an assurance could be given only by the Cuban Government and by nobody else. He told me that he had already conveyed this position to the Government of the Soviet Union.

I stressed the need to strengthen the U N. and observed that the present situation should be a test-case for strengthening the world organization which is the best means of ensuring peace. While I did not wish to enter into a dialogue regarding the Soviet and Cuban positions on the admission of inspection teams on Cuban soil, I appealed to the Prime Minister to reconsider his position not only for the sake of the U.N., but also for the sake of future Soviet-Cuban relations and Soviet-United States relations, which are extremely important for the peace of the area.

The Prime Minister informed me that he had already included his observations on Cuban sovereignty and the lack of competence of any outside power to take any inspection measures in Cuba, in his broadcast speech proposed to be delivered on Thursday night. He informed me that in his speech he proposed to tell the Soviet Union that if the latter intended to go ahead with Chairman Khrushchev's proposal to invite U.N. inspection teams in Cuba, he would counter with a proposal that the U.N. inspection teams should operate outside Cuban territorial waters.

I told the Prime Minister that such counter proposals would not serve any useful purpose, but would even create new and difficult problems, and requested him not to include this idea in the proposed broadcast speech.

The Prime Minister agreed that he would withdraw this portion of his speech from the prepared text.

I thanked him for this kind gesture and brought up the matter of a next Security Council meeting, and I asked the Prime Minister if he had any idea about the timing of the next Security Council meeting when he (U Thant) had to submit his report on the result of his mediating efforts.

The Prime Minister suggested that Wednesday the 7th of November would be suitable.

I jokingly agreed since the United States elections would take place on November 6, and the Prime Minister laughed.

I requested the Prime Minister to see that the latter's broadcast speech on Thursday night should be conciliatory in tone, and that in my humble opinion, the Prime Minister should not deal with very contentious problems. I also told him that in such a moment of crisis, the human factor is most important and the public statements of leaders of men should be free of violent diatribes and biting attacks. I apologised to the Prime Minister for having ventured such a suggestion. I even wondered if the Prime Minister could not postpone the projected broadcast speech until such time as the situation progressed satisfactorily.

The Prime Minister replied that originally he was to broadcast the previous night but had postponed it because of my visit. He said that if he had to postpone once again, the Cuban people would be wondering about the reason behind it and they would come to wrong conclusions. The timing had been announced repeatedly in the press and radio, and therefore he could not postpone it further.

I stated that, since I was going back to New York on that day, and since I would see the United States representative the same night, I would propose to the United States to extend the suspension period of the naval quarantine still further, and perhaps I might succeed in persuading the United States to comply with such a request. In the meantime, I requested the Prime Minister not to issue any public statement which might

damage the prospects of a peaceful solution.

The Prime Minister assured me that he would not make any public statement which might prejudice the latter's efforts for a peaceful solution of the Cuban problem.

I then requested the Prime Minister to keep strictly confidential, at least for some time, the substance of their discussions at that meeting in the public interest.

The Prime Minister agreed and said that he would not make this information available to anyone outside the group present at the discussion. He asked me if I had any objection to using the proceedings of the previous meeting, as recorded by his side, in his projected radio speech the next night.

I replied that I had no objection to it.

I then brought up the question of the immediate problem as distinct from the long-term problem of Cuba, which was brought up at the first meeting. I explained to him that in the context of the Security Council discussion I had no mandate to discuss long-term issues, and that I would prefer to confine the discussion to immediate issues only. I told the Prime Minister that my understanding was that I should deal only with the immediate issue in my recommendation to the Security Council. If any Member of the Security Council or Cuba were to introduce an item dealing with a permanent solution of the problem, I was afraid that the Security Council could not and would not

adopt any constructive resolution.

The Prime Minister said that the Cuban problem would not be solved if the Security Council confined its attention only to the immediate issues. The immediate issues must be linked with the question of a permanent solution on the basis of the five points he had outlined earlier. He was convinced that there would be no lasting solution of the Cuban problem without dealing with the five points. He assured me that he and the Cuban people were honestly searching for a peaceful and lasting solution of the problem, and that they could not accept any other solution that would mean the status quo and continued existence of threats to peace. Any formula adopted by the Security Council must guarantee the full sovereignty of Cuba. Cuba has law and justice on her side, and from any point of view, Cuba's position can stand any test.

I then asked the Prime Minister if it would be agreeable to the Cuban Government if I were to leave behind one or two of my aides in Havana to continue to have a direct link between the Government of Cuba and the Secretary-General. I assured him that my intention to leave behind one or two of my aides did in no way imply U.N. inspection of any activities in Cuba.

The Prime Minister said that such an agreement was impossible. The Cuban people would conclude that the Secretary-General had left behind some people with a view to inspection of installations in Cuba as had been repeatedly broadcast from the United States radio for the past three days. The acceptance of such an arrangement would be interpreted by the Cuban people as humiliating

on the part of Cuba. Therefore, the Cuban Government would send a mission to the U.N., led by the Foreign Minister for high-level negotiations in New York. The Foreign Minister and his colleagues in New York would be better contacts with the Secretary-General than his representatives in Havana. He said that I should take back all with me to New York, to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the Cuban people.

I told the Prime Minister that I would not insist on his proposal and assured him that I would take back with me all the people I brought from New York.

I brought up the question of the United States pilot who was reported to be missing on Saturday. Purely on humanitarian grounds, I requested the Prime Minister to return him to the United States if he were still alive.

The Prime Minister replied that he was not alive. He said that if he were alive he certainly would be sent back to the United States, and if the United States desired, his body would be sent back under the auspices of the Secretary-General. He explained that the United States plane, a U-2 aircraft, was brought down by Cuban anti-aircraft guns, manned only by Cubans, inside Cuban territory, and that the airman fell with the plane and died instantly. He could not accept the legalisation of foreign intrusion of Cuban airspace. This continued infringement of Cuban airspace by the United States is one of the major

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problems confronting not only Cuba, but the whole world. He said that the United States should try to avoid such illegal flights. The Cuban people could no longer tolerate such daily provocations. The Cuban people would destroy any plane any time which intruded into Cuban airspace.

I observed that, from strictly legal considerations, these overflights over the territory of a sovereign country could be regarded as illegal. But I pointed to the fact that the United States wanted to be assured that the promised dismantling of missile launching pads was actually carried out or not.

The Prime Minister then referred to the illegality of the naval blockade. He said that such an act on the part of the United States was absolutely illegal.

I told the Prime Minister that it was with this consideration in mind that I had requested in the Security Council that the blockade should be suspended, and I assured the Prime Minister that as soon as I got back to New York, I would request the United States representatives to extend the period of suspension.

The Prime Minister told me that in the course of the last three days he had made a tour of the Havana province twice, and on both occasions he saw United States planes flying over the province. He said that it was very difficult for his military people to restrain themselves from firing at such planes, since most of the military men in Cuba are young and passionate.

I then brought up the question of U.N. technical assistance programme to operate in Cuba. I told the Prime Minister that at an appropriate time I would like to bring up this question with the Cuban Government.

The Prime Minister thanked me for this idea, and he said that the Cuban Government would agree to have U.N.T.A. The Prime Minister again stressed on the necessity of taking up the five points in the Security Council. He mentioned that the Belgrade Conference of September 1961 had already endorsed these five points by implication, though not directly.

I then referred to the growing influence of the non-aligned countries in the U.N. and I mentioned the fact that most of these non-aligned countries had played a very significant role in easing international tensions, and I told the Prime Minister that I had the privilege to be present at the Belgrade Conference, and earlier in Afro-Asian Conference at Bandoeng, both in a different capacity.

The Prime Minister told me that he was aware of this and he said that he had very great respect both for the U.N. and the Secretary-General, who was carrying out a difficult task with positive aims for the achievement of peace. If the U.N. and the Secretary-General achieve positive results in the Cuban problem, there would be a very strong and positive public opinion regarding the U.N. which would be more effective in the future.



I agreed with this observation, and I asked the Prime Minister if he wanted to raise any more questions.

The Prime Minister said that he had no further questions to raise and that he was grateful to the Secretary-General for his personal efforts to bring about a peaceful solution, and he requested the Secretary-General to take back to the U.N. the impression that the Cuban people were determined to protect their national sovereignty and that they would not accept any humiliating imposition from outside.

I then re-iterated my previous request that the Prime Minister's proposed broadcast talk on Thursday night should be mild in tone and conciliatory in presentation. He reminded the Prime Minister that the whole world would be focussing its attention on that speech and, therefore, the utmost care should be given in its presentation.

The Prime Minister assured him that it would be the mildest of all his speeches. United Press and Associated Press were again talking of aggression, and he said that the United States would not give up their intention of launching another aggression. He said that high officials in Washington publicly declared, according to wire services, that they would invade Cuba again. Therefore, he became more and more convinced that a solution of the immediate issue alone would not end the problem. The five points must be discussed in all respects for ensuring a permanent peace. He concluded the discussion with the observation that the Pentagon was now more powerful than ever because of the Cuban crisis.

Then the Prime Minister asked the Secretary-General to pose for photos and remarked that this photo would be historic if the Cuban problem was solved, and would mean nothing if there would be no solution.